



## Government For the People

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<b>Curriculum Area</b>	History and Social Science
<b>Subject Area</b>	US Government
<b>Grade Level</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> grade.
<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students will describe the differences among the three branches of government.</li> <li>• The students will discuss checks and balances and the balance of power and diagram these ideas.</li> <li>• The students will be able to analyze current events in terms of which branch of government is responsible for addressing issues involved and which is effected by the issues involved.</li> </ul>
<b>Correlation to the SOL</b>	New CE.6 C/T 8.1, 8.4
<b>Video/Technology Hardware/Software Needed</b>	<p><b>For each team of 2 students:</b> Computer with Internet connection and printer (preferably color) Drawing software (such as <i>KidPix</i> or <i>ClarisWorks</i>)</p> <p><b>Web Sites:</b> <i>Ben's Guide to Government</i> <a href="http://bensguide.gpo.gov/6-8/government/branches.html">http://bensguide.gpo.gov/6-8/government/branches.html</a> <i>Virtual Tour of the US Government</i> <a href="http://www.virtualfreesites.com/us-gov.html">http://www.virtualfreesites.com/us-gov.html</a></p>
<b>Materials Required</b>	<p><b>For class:</b> Whiteboard or Chalkboard Erasable pens or chalk</p>
<b>Procedures/Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Put the students into balanced teams of 2. Have students visit either of the two Web sites listed that relate to the US Government. After reading about the three branches, the balance of power and the system of checks and balances, have students prepare for a project to incorporate what they have learned into current events.</li> <li>2. Tell students that they will create a poster (8.5 x 11) that will diagram the ideas that they have been studying. This will be a whole class activity. The teacher should use a whiteboard or a chalkboard to help the students diagram their ideas. Tell the students that they will need to leave the center of the poster free of images and text so they can incorporate some other information later.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Once the students have agreed on a suitable graphic representation, have the teams use a drawing program to re-create the diagram.</li> <li>4. The team must then pick a current issue or event (such as election reform, tightening air pollution controls, an international crisis, etc.). The teacher may want to pre-determine a list of topics that would be acceptable.</li> <li>5. Teams brainstorm how their event or issue effects and is effected by the three branches of government. They also brainstorm ideas about how the concept of balance of power and the system of checks and balances effect and are effected by the same event or issue.</li> <li>6. Students use their drawing program to add text in appropriate places to illustrate their ideas. These should be printed and posted around the room.</li> </ol>
<b>Content Assessment</b>	The teacher will evaluate the team's poster based on their research and thoughtful application of ideas.
<b>Technology Integration Assessment</b>	The teacher will observe the use of technology during the research and poster creation process.
<b>Extensions</b>	<p><b>English:</b> Students could write an essay to accompany their diagram.</p> <p><b>History:</b> Students could investigate issues of the past and analyze them similarly.</p>